

# The Age of Jackson

## MAIN IDEA

During a time of growing sectionalism, Andrew Jackson's election in 1828 ushered in a new era of popular democracy.

## WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Jackson's use of presidential powers laid the foundation for the modern presidency.

## Terms & Names

- Henry Clay
- American System
- John C. Calhoun
- Missouri Compromise
- Andrew Jackson
- John Quincy Adams
- Jacksonian democracy
- Trail of Tears
- John Tyler

## One American's Story

Robert Fulton designed and built the first commercially successful steamboat. In 1807 his *Clermont* made the 150-mile trip up the Hudson River from New York City to Albany in 32 hours. Another one of Fulton's boats, the *Paragon*, was so luxurious that it had a paneled dining room and bedrooms. Fulton even posted regulations on his luxurious steamboats.

### A PERSONAL VOICE ROBERT FULTON

"As the steamboat has been fitted up in an elegant style, order is necessary to keep it so; gentlemen will therefore please to observe cleanliness, and a reasonable attention not to injure the furniture; for this purpose no one must sit on a table under the penalty of half a dollar each time, and every breakage of tables, chairs, sofas, or windows, tearing of curtains, or injury of any kind must be paid for before leaving the boat."

—quoted in *Steamboats Come True: American Inventors in Action*

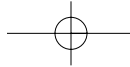


▲ Steamboats, like the one pictured here, could move against a river's current or a strong wind.

Steamboats like the one Fulton described did more than comfortably transport passengers. They also carried freight and played an important role in uniting the nation economically. Although tensions continued to arise between the different sections of the nation, a growing national spirit kept the country together. This spirit was ultimately personified by Andrew Jackson—a self-made man from the growing West who was both confident and dynamic.

## Regional Economies Create Differences

In the early decades of the 19th century, the economies of the various regions of the United States developed differently. The Northeast began to industrialize while the South and West continued to be more agricultural.



**EARLY INDUSTRY IN THE UNITED STATES** The Industrial Revolution—large-scale production resulting in massive change in social and economic organization—began in Great Britain in the 18th century and gradually reached the United States.

Industry took off first in New England, whose economy depended on shipping and foreign trade. Agriculture there was not highly profitable, so New Englanders were more ready than other Americans to embrace new forms of manufacturing—and prime among these were mechanized textile, or fabric, mills.

Soon, farmers in the North began to specialize in one or two crops or types of livestock (such as corn and cattle), sell what they produced to urban markets, and then purchase with cash whatever else they needed from stores. Increasingly, these were items made in Northern factories. As a result, a market economy began to develop in which agriculture and manufacturing each supported the growth of the other. **A**

#### MAIN IDEA

#### Analyzing Causes

**A** How did agriculture and industry support a market economy in the North?

**THE SOUTH REMAINS AGRICULTURAL** Meanwhile, the South continued to grow as an agricultural power. Eli Whitney's invention of a cotton gin (short for "engine," or machine) in 1793 made it possible for Southern farmers to produce cotton more profitably. The emergence of a Cotton Kingdom in the South—and

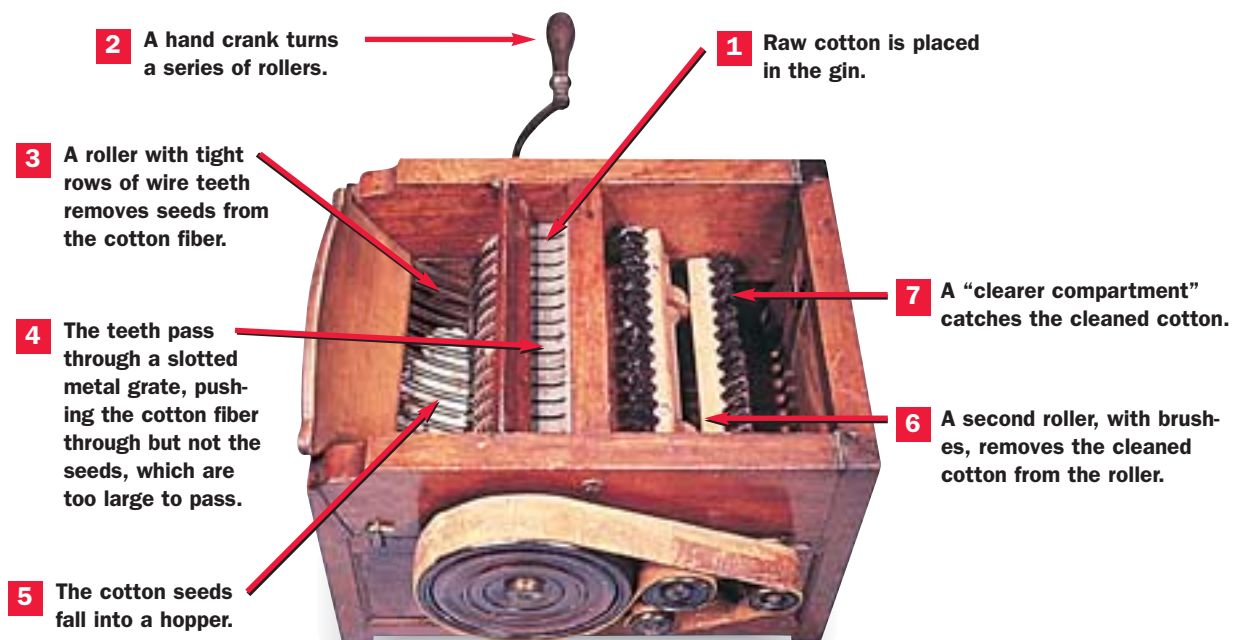
## Science

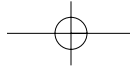


## Technology

### THE COTTON GIN

In 1794, Eli Whitney was granted a patent for a "new and useful improvement in the mode of Ginning Cotton." Workers who previously could clean only one pound of cotton by hand per day could now clean as much as fifty pounds per day. Because of Whitney's cotton gin, cotton production in the United States increased from three thousand bales in 1790 to more than two million bales in 1850.





thus the need for more field labor—contributed to the expansion of slavery. Between 1790 and 1820, the enslaved population increased from less than 700,000 to over 1.5 million. In the North, things were different. By 1804, states north of Delaware had either abolished slavery or had enacted laws for gradual emancipation. Slavery declined in the North, but some slaves remained there for decades.

### Vocabulary

**emancipation:** the act of freeing from bondage or slavery

## Balancing Nationalism and Sectionalism

These economic differences often created political tensions between the different sections of the nation. Throughout the first half of the 19th century, however, American leaders managed to keep the nation together.

### HISTORICAL SPOTLIGHT

#### THE SUPREME COURT BOOSTS NATIONAL POWER

As Henry Clay promoted the American System in an effort to strengthen nationalism, the Supreme Court also boosted national power with two significant decisions.

In *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819), the high court denied Maryland the right to tax the Bank of the United States, thus strengthening the authority of the national government over state governments.

In *Gibbons v. Ogden* (1824), the Court further bolstered federal power by affirming the national government's right to regulate interstate commerce.

**CLAY'S AMERICAN SYSTEM** As the North, South, and West developed different economies, President Madison developed a plan to move the United States toward economic independence from Britain and other European powers. In 1815 he presented his plan to Congress. It included three major points:

- establishing a protective tariff
- rechartering the national bank
- sponsoring the development of transportation systems and other internal improvements in order to make travel throughout the nation easier

House Speaker **Henry Clay** promoted the plan as the “**American System.**” **B**

Madison and Clay supported tariffs on imports to protect U.S. industry from British competition. Most Northerners also welcomed protective tariffs. However, people in the South and West, whose livelihoods did not depend on manufacturing, were not as eager to tax European imports. Nevertheless, Clay, who was from the West (Kentucky), and **John C. Calhoun**, a Southerner (South Carolina), convinced congressmen from their regions to approve the Tariff of 1816. Also in 1816, Congress voted to charter the Second Bank of the United States for a 20-year period and to create a unified currency.

### MAIN IDEA

#### Analyzing Motives

**B** What was the intention behind the “American System”?

**THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE** In spite of these efforts to unify the national economy, sectional conflicts remained part of American politics. In 1818 settlers in Missouri requested admission to the Union. Northerners and Southerners disagreed, however, on whether Missouri should be admitted as a free state or a slave state.

Behind the leadership of Henry Clay, Congress passed a series of agreements in 1820–1821 known as the **Missouri Compromise**. Under these agreements, Maine was admitted as a free state and Missouri as a slave state. The rest of the Louisiana Territory was split into two parts. The dividing line was set at 36°30′ north latitude. South of the line, slavery was legal. North of the line—except in Missouri—slavery was banned. **C**

### MAIN IDEA

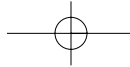
#### Summarizing

**C** What agreements made up the Missouri Compromise?

## The Election of Andrew Jackson

Despite these sectional tensions, the story of America in the early 19th century was one of expansion—expanding economies, expanding territory, and expanding democracy. The man who embraced the spirit of that expansion and to many personified it was **Andrew Jackson**, who captured the presidency in 1828.





**Vocabulary**  
**corrupt:** marked  
by bribery

**THE ELECTION OF 1824** In 1824, Andrew Jackson lost his bid for the presidency to **John Quincy Adams**. Jacksonians, or followers of Jackson, accused Adams and Jackson's political enemy, Henry Clay, of stealing the presidency. Then, because Adams appointed Clay secretary of state, the Jacksonians claimed Adams had struck a corrupt bargain. The split between Clay and Jackson tore apart the Democratic-Republican party. While Clay and his faction were called the National Republican Party, the Jacksonians became known as the Democratic Party.

**EXPANDING DEMOCRACY CHANGES POLITICS** During John Quincy Adams's presidency, most states had eased property requirements for voting, thereby enlarging the voting population. In the election of 1824, approximately 350,000 white males voted for the presidency. In 1828, over three times that number voted. Many of these new voters were common people who viewed the rugged westerner Jackson as their champion. The support of this new voting bloc gave Jackson victory in the election of 1828.

## Jacksonian Democracy

**THE SPOILS SYSTEM** Jackson's ideal of political power for all classes is often called **Jacksonian democracy**. As part of this philosophy, Jackson sought to give common people a chance to participate in government. He did this through the spoils system, in which new administrations hire their own supporters to replace supporters of the previous administration. Using the spoils system, Jackson gave away huge numbers of jobs to friends and also to political allies.

**President-elect Andrew Jackson greets well-wishers on his way to Washington, D.C., to be inaugurated president in 1829.**



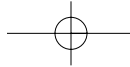
### KEY PLAYER



**ANDREW JACKSON**  
**1767-1845**

Andrew Jackson thought of himself as a man of the people. He had been born in poverty in the Carolina backcountry, the son of Scots-Irish immigrants. He was the first president since George Washington without a college education.

At the time of his election at the age of 61, however, Jackson was hardly one of the common people. He had built a highly successful career in Tennessee in law, politics, land speculation, cotton planting, and soldiering. His home, the Hermitage, was a mansion, not a log cabin. Anyone who owned more than a hundred slaves, as Jackson did, was very wealthy.



**THE INDIAN REMOVAL ACT** In 1830 Congress, with the support of Jackson, passed the Indian Removal Act. Under this law, the federal government provided funds to negotiate treaties that would force the Native Americans to move west.



▲  
*Trail of Tears*,  
a 1992 painting  
by Troy Anderson,  
a Cherokee artist

Many of the tribes signed removal treaties. However, the Cherokee Nation refused and fought the government in the courts. In 1832, the Supreme Court ruled in *Worcester v. Georgia* that the state of Georgia could not regulate the Cherokee Nation by law or invade Cherokee lands. However, Jackson refused to abide by the Supreme Court decision, saying, “John Marshall has made his decision; now let him enforce it.” **D**

**THE TRAIL OF TEARS** In the years following the Court’s ruling, U.S. troops rounded up the Cherokee and drove them into camps to await the journey west. A Baptist missionary described the scene.

#### MAIN IDEA

#### Analyzing Events

**D** How did the federal government initially try to enforce the Indian Removal Act?

#### A PERSONAL VOICE EVAN JONES

“The Cherokees are nearly all prisoners. They had been dragged from their houses and encamped at the forts and military places, all over the nation. In Georgia especially, multitudes were allowed no time to take anything with them except the clothes they had on. Well-furnished houses were left as prey to plunderers.”

—Baptist Missionary Magazine, June 16, 1838

Beginning in the fall of 1838, the Cherokee were sent off in groups of about 1,000 each on the 800-mile journey, mostly on foot. As winter came, more and more Cherokee died. The Cherokee buried more than a quarter of their people along the **Trail of Tears**, the forced marches the Cherokee followed from Georgia to the Indian Territory. (See map on page 125.)

## Nullification and the Bank War

In 1824 and again in 1828, Congress increased the Tariff of 1816. Jackson’s vice-president, John C. Calhoun of South Carolina, called the 1828 tariff a Tariff of Abominations because he blamed it for economic problems in the South.

The South’s economy depended on cotton exports. Yet the high tariff on manufactured goods reduced British exports to the United States, and because of this, Britain bought less cotton. With the decline of British goods, the South was now forced to buy the more expensive Northern manufactured goods. From the South’s point of view, the North was getting rich at the expense of the South.

**THE NULLIFICATION CRISIS** To try to free South Carolinians from the tariff, Calhoun developed a theory of nullification. Calhoun’s theory held that the U.S. Constitution was based on a compact among the sovereign states. If the Constitution had been established by 13 sovereign states, he reasoned, then the states must still be sovereign, and each would have the right to determine whether acts of Congress were constitutional. If a state found an act to be unconstitutional, the state could declare the offending law nullified, or inoperative, within its borders. **E**

The Senate debated the tariff question (and the underlying states’ rights issue). Senator Daniel Webster of Massachusetts opposed nullification and South Carolina Senator Robert Hayne aired Calhoun’s views.

#### MAIN IDEA

#### Making Predictions

**E** What do you think might be the consequences of Calhoun’s nullification theory for federal-state relations?

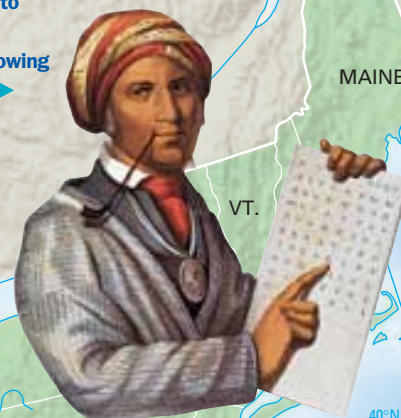




Many Cherokees in the western territory, like the woman pictured here, taught their children at home in order to keep the Cherokee language and customs alive.

## Effects of the Indian Removal Act, 1830s–1840s

Sequoyah, or George Guess, devised the Cherokee alphabet in 1821 to help preserve the culture of the Cherokee Nation against the growing threat of American expansion. ▶



By 1840, about 15,000 Cherokee had been forcibly moved 800 miles west on routes afterward called the Trail of Tears. On the Trail of Tears they suffered from cold, hunger, and diseases such as pneumonia, tuberculosis, smallpox, and cholera. About one-fourth died.

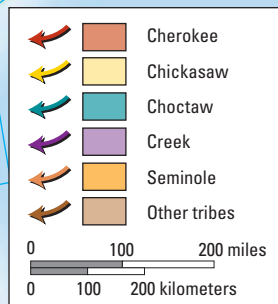
Nearly 15,000 Creek, many in manacles and chains, were moved from Alabama and Georgia to the Canadian River in Indian Territory in 1835.

REPUBLIC OF TEXAS (after 1836)

By 1834, about 14,000 Choctaw had relocated along the Red River under the terms of the Indian Removal Act of 1830. About 7,000 remained in Mississippi.

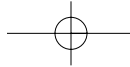


Detail from *Trail of Tears*, a painting by Robert Lindeux



### GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER

- Place** Where were most of the tribes moved?
- Movement** What do you think were the effects of this removal on Native Americans?



In 1832 the issue of states' rights was put to a test when Congress raised tariffs again. South Carolinians declared the tariffs of 1828 and 1832 "null, void, and no law." Then they threatened to secede, or withdraw from the Union, if customs officials tried to collect duties.

In response, an outraged Jackson urged Congress to pass the Force Bill to allow the federal government to use the military if state authorities resisted paying proper duties. A bloody confrontation seemed likely until Henry Clay forged a compromise in 1833. Clay proposed a tariff bill that would gradually lower duties over a ten-year period. The compromise also included passage of the Force Bill. The tension between states' rights and federal authority subsided—temporarily.

**JACKSON'S BANK WAR** Although Jackson defended federal power in the nullification crisis, he tried to decrease federal power when it came to the Second Bank of the United States. Jackson believed that the national bank was an agent of the wealthy, and that its members cared nothing for the common people.

In 1832 Jackson won reelection despite the efforts of his critics to make a campaign issue out of Jackson's opposition to the bank. After his reelection, he tried to kill the bank by withdrawing all government deposits from the bank's branches and placing them in certain state banks called "pet banks" because of their loyalty to the Democratic Party. As a result, the Bank of the United States became just another bank. **F**

Jackson won the bank war, but his tactics and policies angered many people. Many accused him of acting more like a king than a president. In 1832, his opponents formed a new political party, which they later called the Whig Party.

#### MAIN IDEA

#### Analyzing Motives

**F** What were some of Jackson's reasons for opposing the Second Bank of the United States?

### Analyzing Political Cartoons

#### "KING ANDREW THE FIRST"

Andrew Jackson once justified his tendency to place personal prerogative above constitutional law or national policy by stating that "One man with courage makes a majority." His critics replied with accusations of tyranny. The *New York American* condemned Jackson as a "maniac," who would "trample the rights of our people under his feet." The Whig convention of 1834 declared, "Your president has become your MONARCH."

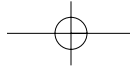
Both of those sentiments are reflected in this political cartoon that portrays Jackson as a king.

- Ancient portraits of kings often depicted them grinding their conquered enemies beneath their heel. Beneath Jackson's feet are the torn pages of the Constitution.
- In one hand, Jackson is holding a scepter, a symbol of kingly power, while in the other, he is holding the veto, a symbol of presidential power.

#### SKILLBUILDER Analyzing Political Cartoons

1. What does this cartoon suggest about Jackson's attitude toward the Constitution?
2. How does this cartoon particularly comment on Jackson's use of presidential power?





## Successors Deal with Jackson's Legacy

When Jackson announced that he would not run for a third term in 1836, the Democrats chose Vice-President Martin Van Buren as their candidate. The newly formed Whig Party ran three regional candidates against him. With Jackson's support, however, Van Buren easily won the election.

**THE PANIC OF 1837** Along with the presidency, however, Van Buren inherited the consequences of Jackson's bank war. Many of the pet banks that accepted federal deposits were wildcat banks that printed bank notes wildly in excess of the gold and silver they had on deposit. Such wildcat banks were doomed to fail when people tried to redeem their currency for gold or silver.

### MAIN IDEA

#### Analyzing Causes

**G** How did "wildcat banks" contribute to the panic of 1837?

By May 1837, many banks stopped accepting paper currency. In the panic of 1837, bank closings and the collapse of the credit system cost many people their savings, bankrupted hundreds of businesses, and put more than a third of the population out of work. **G**

**HARRISON AND TYLER** In 1840 Van Buren ran for reelection against Whig Party candidate William Henry Harrison, who was known as "Tippecanoe" for a battle he won against Native Americans in 1811. The Whigs blamed Van Buren for the weak economy and portrayed Harrison, the old war hero, as a man of the people and Van Buren as an aristocrat.

Harrison won the election, but died just a month after his inauguration. **John Tyler**, Harrison's vice-president, became president. A strong-minded Virginian and former Democrat, Tyler opposed many parts of the Whig program. He halted hopes for significant Whig reforms.

The Democrat and Whig parties went on to dominate national politics until the 1850s. The new politicians appealed more to passion than to reason. They courted popularity in a way that John Quincy Adams and his predecessors never would have. Thus, the style of politics in America had changed drastically since the 1790s. Political speeches became a form of mass entertainment, involving far more Americans in the political process. Also, the West was playing an increasing role in national politics. That trend would continue as more Americans moved to places like Texas and California.



### ASSESSMENT

**1. TERMS & NAMES** For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- Henry Clay
- American System
- John C. Calhoun
- Missouri Compromise
- Andrew Jackson
- John Quincy Adams
- Jacksonian democracy
- Trail of Tears
- John Tyler

### MAIN IDEA

#### 2. TAKING NOTES

In a chart like the one shown, write newspaper headlines that tell the significance of each date.

Dates	Headlines
1815	
1820	
1828	
1832	
1837	
1838	

### CRITICAL THINKING

#### 3. EVALUATING

In what ways do you think the Missouri Compromise and the nullification crisis of 1832 might be considered important milestones in American history? **Think About:**

- the expansion of slavery into the West
- Calhoun's nullification theory
- Jackson's reaction to South Carolina's actions

#### 4. ANALYZING CAUSES

What factors set the stage for the Indian Removal Act of 1830 and the Trail of Tears? **Think About:**

- U.S. expansion to the west
- removal treaties
- Jackson's response to *Worcester v. Georgia*